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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KOLY](#) [CH](#) [UN](#)
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE: HRD DELEGATION'S MAY 27
MEETING WITH PRC UNITED FRONT WORK DEPARTMENT

Classified By: Acting Political Section Chief Ben Moeling.
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) May 27, 2008; 9:00 a.m.; Beijing, United Front Work
Department.

[1](#)2. (U) Participants:

United States

David J. Kramer, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy,
Human Rights, and Labor
John V. Hanford, Ambassador at Large for International
Religious Freedom
Thomas Christensen, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for
East Asian and Pacific Affairs
Robert K. Harris, Assistant Legal Advisor, Department of State
Richard W. Behrend, PRM Advisor, Department of State
Susan O'Sullivan, Senior Advisor, Bureau of Democracy, Human
Rights, and Labor, Department of State
Eric Barboriak, First Secretary, Embassy Beijing (notetaker)
Emilie L. Kao, Foreign Affairs Officer, Bureau of Democracy
Human Rights, and Labor, International Religious Freedom,
Department of State
Jeannette M. Windon, Special Assistant, Office of Democracy
and Global Affairs, Department of State
Andrea Goodman, Political Officer, Bureau of East Asian and
Pacific Affairs, Department of State
Vicky Segal, Interpreter

PRC

Si Ta, Vice Minister, United Front Work Department
Yang Shaokun, Director, UN Specialized Agency Division,
Department of International Organizations and Conferences,
Liu Yi Bing, Director, Tibet Division, United Front Work
Department
Zhang Xinyi, Staff, United Front Work Department
Fang Qiang, Interpreter, MFA

Summary

[1](#)3. (C) Welcoming the resumption of talks between the Chinese
Government and representatives of the Dalai Lama, A/S Kramer
stressed that the dialogue should bring concrete results.
United Front Work Department Vice Minister Si Ta said China
is open to continued dialogue as long as the "Dalai side"
ceases supporting separatist activities, disrupting the
Olympic Games and inciting violence and terrorist activities
in Tibet and other areas. Vice Minister Si Ta acknowledged
that the Dalai Lama claims to have fulfilled these
requirements, but his actions indicate that he is
"insincere." A/S Kramer cautioned against attributing to the
Dalai Lama actions and responsibilities outside his control.
He also stated that the Chinese Government's accelerated

campaign of patriotic education for monks may have the exact opposite effect intended by Chinese authorities. Ambassador Hanford urged the Chinese Government not to insert itself into the selection of Tibetan Buddhist religious leaders and to allow access to the Panchen Lama. DAS Christensen encouraged the Chinese Government to achieve results through dialogue with representatives of the Dalai Lama. Failure to achieve results through dialogue will likely lead to further instability in Tibet by strengthening the position of Tibetans who do not support the Dalai Lama's non-violent methods to achieve their goals. End Summary.

14. (C) A/S Kramer stated that the United States welcomes the resumption of the dialogue between the Chinese Government and representatives of the Dalai Lama. He expressed his strong hope that the dialogue will be constructive and bring practical results. A/S Kramer said that the Dalai Lama has fulfilled the conditions stipulated by the Chinese Government for dialogue, noting that the Dalai Lama does not advocate independence for Tibet, renounces violence, supports the Beijing Olympics and, in fact, has publicly opposed calls for a boycott. A/S Kramer stated that the United States hopes the dialogue will support the religion, culture and language of Tibet, adding that the United States respects China's territorial integrity and does not support Tibetan independence.

15. (C) Vice Minister Si Ta provided basic background on Tibet, saying that when Tibet was "peacefully liberated" in 1951, its social system was characterized by rulers who exercised both political and religious authority over a feudal system. He said that 95 percent of Tibetans had "no

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personal freedom" and were subject to degrading treatment by local overlords. Democratic reforms launched in 1959 separated religious and political authority and ended feudalism in Tibet. "Millions" of serfs were freed, Vice Minister Si Ta said, and human rights in Tibet "realized remarkable achievements."

Recent Contacts between Chinese Government and Dalai Lama
Representatives

16. (C) Vice Minister Si Ta noted that the May 4 meetings between Chinese Government officials and representatives of the Dalai Lama represented the latest of approximately 20 rounds of meetings that began in 1979 when Premier Deng Xiaoping met with the Dalai Lama's older brother. Vice Minister Si Ta said that the May meeting was originally planned for November 2007, based on an agreement the two sides reached at their June 2007 meeting. However, in October 2007, the U.S. Congress awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to the Dalai Lama, making the situation "not conducive to contact." Vice Minister Si Ta further stated that the two sides discussed the possibility of meeting in March 2008, but the "smashing, beating, burning, looting" events of March 14 in Lhasa prevented such a meeting.

"Three Stops"

17. (C) Vice Minister Si Ta reiterated the Chinese Government's requirements for continuing the dialogue include the "Three Stops": stop separatist activities, stop disrupting the Olympic Games and stop inciting violence and terrorist activities in Tibet and other areas. While acknowledging A/S Kramer's statement that the Dalai Lama had fulfilled these conditions by his public statements, Vice Minister Si Ta said "we look at both his words and deeds." He recalled that religious figures "who were persecuted" by the Dalai Lama recently demonstrated overseas, holding signs with words to the effect that "the Dalai Lama's smile is appealing, but his actions are damaging."

Dalai Lama not Sincere

¶8. (C) The Vice Minister further suggested that the Dalai Lama was involved in disruptions of the Olympic torch relay at various locations overseas and that "incidents and disruptions" at the Great Wall at Mutianyu and at some Olympic venues were "directed by elements sent by the Dalai Lama." The Vice Minister said that Chinese investigations have revealed that the individuals who committed violent crimes in Lhasa, Tibet; Aba County, Sichuan Province; and Xiahe County, Gansu Province, during March 2008 had received instructions from the Dalai Lama.

¶9. (C) Despite these activities, the Chinese Government still keeps "an open door" for dialogue, and discussions with the Dalai Lama's representatives to schedule the next round of discussions are ongoing, according to Vice Minister Si Ta. But up to now, he added, the Dalai Lama has not shown sincerity. During the meeting on May 4, the Dalai Lama's representatives claimed to fulfill the "Three Stops," Vice Minister Si Ta said, but on May 12, during the terrible earthquake in Sichuan Province, they "continued to carry out (separatist) activities." On May 18-19, the Dalai Lama sent people to demonstrate at Chinese diplomatic missions overseas and many of his followers still wish to carry out a march to Tibet from India, which would disrupt social stability in Tibet.

Dalai Lama's Authority not Absolute

¶10. (C) A/S Kramer suggested that like those who wrongly attribute the various "color revolutions" in Eastern Europe to U.S. influence, many people inappropriately attribute some actions to the Dalai Lama and claim he has authority that he does not. A/S Kramer pointed out that the Dalai Lama is an influential figure and has many followers throughout the world, but he does not control all of his them. A/S Kramer expressed strong doubt that the Dalai Lama ordered his followers to commit the violent acts for which he has been blamed, noting the practical impossibilities of the communications necessary to direct such activities. A/S Kramer said the Dalai Lama's own words take on more importance given that he is not in control of an army, not in control of a government and is a religious leader influential with Tibetans. A close reexamination of his statements will reveal that the Dalai Lama has met the conditions stipulated

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by the Chinese Government, A/S Kramer said. He added that the role of the United States is not to "micromanage" the dialogue process but to encourage the Chinese Government and the representatives of the Dalai Lama to develop the most appropriate solutions to longstanding issues together.

Patriotic Education of Monks

¶11. (C) A/S Kramer raised U.S. concerns that China is accelerating its patriotic education campaign for monks, which, by forcing Tibetan monks to renounce the Dalai Lama, may have the exact opposite effect the Chinese Government intends. Vice Minister Si Ta responded that education in temples and monasteries is "necessary in our country," but the Chinese Government has not adopted a policy to force monks to sign their names to documents against their will or denounce the Dalai Lama. Since the events in March, Chinese authorities have been teaching monks about what activities are illegal and also informing them about their lawful rights.

Open Access to Judicial Proceedings Related to 3/14

¶12. (C) A/S Kramer urged the Chinese Government to ensure trials of individuals arrested in connection with the March

incidents in Tibet are open and transparent and to allow observers to attend the proceedings. A/S Kramer further urged that lawyers be allowed to represent the accused without fear of negative consequences.

Method to Choose Religious Leaders

¶13. (C) Ambassador Hanford observed that Chinese interlocutors often insist that church and state matters should be separate, yet the Chinese Government inserts itself directly in religious affairs in the matter of choosing religious leaders. He noted the irony that the Chinese Communist Party does not allow its members to have religious affiliations, yet the Party chooses spiritual leaders in Tibet. Welcoming the positive remarks President Hu Jintao expressed on the constructive role religion can play, Ambassador Hanford expressed the hope that religious believers and leaders could be part of the government, but stressed that the government should respect the will of religious groups in choosing their leadership.

¶14. (C) Vice Minister Si Ta said that the Chinese Government in 2007 issued measures on the reincarnation of living Buddhas. Those measures are aimed at protecting the unique historic conventions and rituals in Tibetan Buddhism, according to Si Ta. Regulations on reincarnation are not new, Si Ta said, noting that the Qing Dynasty also promulgated rules on reincarnation, citing the "Golden Urn" tradition in which the Qing drew lots from a golden urn to determine the next incarnate lama. Vice Minister Si Ta said China also draws lessons from other countries, where religious leaders may be chosen by the religious community but must be confirmed by the head of state. Vice Minister Si Ta stated that the Chinese Government will not interfere in or disrupt personal expressions of faith as long as those expressions do not interfere with "social life." "There must be a balance between religion and society," he said.

¶15. (C) Ambassador Hanford noted that Qing Dynasty leaders were devout Buddhists, which made the nature of their control over the incarnation process substantively different than a secular government choosing religious leaders.

Access to the Eleventh Panchen Lama

¶16. (C) Ambassador Hanford requested that independent observers be given access to the boy recognized by the Dalai Lama as the 11th Panchen Lama, noting that he is now 18 years old. Vice Minister Si Ta said that Gendun Choekyi Nyima is not the 11th Panchen Lama, because he was not chosen according to custom and tradition. "He's just an ordinary Chinese boy," Vice Minister Si Ta said, who is currently receiving a good education and who "doesn't want to be in front of the camera."

¶17. (C) Vice Minister Si Ta stressed that Tibet is a "treasure, a shining pearl" of Chinese culture and that attitude is reflected in Chinese Government policies that support the development and preservation of culture in Tibet.

Vice Minister Si Ta noted that in the 10th Five-Year Plan, the Chinese Government allocated RMB 300 million to restore Tibetan temples and the Chinese Government will allocate a

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further RMB 600 million in the 11th Five-Year Plan.

More Freedom for Religious Groups

¶18. (C) Ambassador Hanford said he hoped the registration requirements for different religious groups would be liberalized to allow for more places of worship. He said that Beijing offers a perfect example of the need for more religious sites, noting that Beijing, with a population of 17

million, has very few places of worship for Protestants, Catholics and other religious groups. Ambassador Hanford noted that many Christian groups would like to obtain legal status through registration but do not wish to affiliate with the official patriotic churches. Ambassador Hanford said Hong Kong offers a good example of a facilitative posture for church registration.

¶19. (C) In discussing Xinjiang, Ambassador Hanford stated that the United States and China share a common interest in combating terrorism. Ambassador Hanford cited the example of his work with the Government of Saudi Arabia in removing language from educational materials which advocates hatred. Ambassador Hanford urged the Chinese Government to remove restrictions on Uighurs who wish to participate in the Hajj and on the observance of Ramadan in some areas, and to allow greater religious-based education for Uighur youth.

Failure of Dialogue Will Likely Lead to Further Instability

¶20. (C) DAS Christensen stressed that the United States wants to see a stable China, and that President Bush will attend what we hope and expect will be a successful Olympic Games. The United States recognizes Tibet as part of China and has spoken out early and consistently against violence by all sides in Tibet, he said. The United States does not view the Tibetan community as a monolithic body under complete control of the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama is an influential person whom many people respect and admire, but some of his followers are frustrated with the peaceful methods the Dalai Lama has advocated. DAS Christensen noted the "widespread frustration" felt by some members of the Tibetan community who wish to see progress on attaining their aspirations of autonomy regardless of the method used. The key issue in this context is that the Chinese Government has a window of opportunity to hold a constructive dialogue with representatives of the Dalai Lama, who, fulfilling Chinese demands, rejects independence for Tibet and supports peaceful means and a successful Olympics. The danger is that more violent elements, frustrated by the peaceful strategy of the Dalai Lama, will gain more prominence and influence in the Tibetan community should the dialogue not produce results, thereby decreasing the chances for stability in Tibet. The United States views the resumption of the dialogue as a wise decision by the Chinese Government and a sign of strength and confidence, but the dialogue must produce results to be truly successful.

¶21. (C) Vice Minister Si Ta said the United States and China have developed lasting relations since World War II, when both sides fought against fascism. The two countries share common interests and should expand consensus and cooperation but not allow the issue of the Dalai Lama to become an obstacle that disrupts relations. Vice Minister Si Ta reiterated that the Chinese Government is keeping "the door open" and maintains a positive attitude towards extending a results-oriented dialogue with representatives of the Dalai Lama.

¶22. (U) The delegation cleared this cable.
RANDT